

SMALL-TOWN PASTORS' CONFERENCE

September 25-27, 2025 ♦♦♦ Lancaster, Pennsylvania

A conference tailored for those who minister in town and country settings

PLENARY SESSION SPEAKERS

Adam Kipp



Executive Director, RHMA; longtime small-town pastor; DMin in rural ministry; professor in RHMA's TACT Program

Steve Mathewson



Adjunct professor, Western Seminary and Moody Theological Seminary; rural pastor in Montana for 20 years; grew up the son of a former RHMA Director; author, including *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Poetry*

Brandon O'Brien



Senior Director of Global Thought Leadership, Redeemer City to City, a global church planting network; two former small-town church pastorates; author, including *The Strategically Small Church: Intimate, Nimble, Authentic, Effective*

David Pinckney



Director of New Initiatives, Small Town Summits; Acts 29's North Atlantic Regional Director; former church planter in New Hampshire; rural pastor's son

SEMINAR LEADERS

Denna Busenitz



Kurt Busenitz



Tim Howard



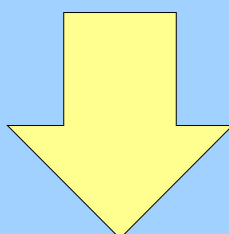
Rex Howe



Liz Pinckney



Aaron Yoder



LEADER BIOS

Denna Busenitz

RHMA Mission Ministries Assistant; served with her husband, Kurt, for 20 years as church planters in the Sandhills Region of Nebraska; member, Flowers for the Pastor's Wife Board of Reference

Kurt Busenitz

RHMA Director of Church Planting; 20 years as a church planter in the Sandhills Region of Nebraska

Tim Howard

Small-town pastor, Eastford Baptist Church, Eastford, Connecticut; Bible professor, Davis College (New York State)

Rex Howe

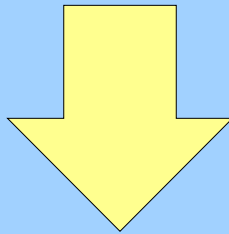
President, Tri-State Bible College, South Point, Ohio; former small-town pastor; co-host of the Level Paths Podcast of the Appalachian Ministry Institute; contributing author of *The God of Small Places: A Theological Foundation for Rural Ministry*

Liz Pinckney

Women's Ministry Coordinator for Small Town Summits; serves with her husband at River of Grace Church in Concord, New Hampshire; former member of a church plant in Brattleboro, Vermont, overseeing women's discipleship; passionate about God's heart for the "small places"

Aaron Yoder

Director of Church Strengthening, RHMA; small-town church planter's son; former youth pastor and senior pastor



SEMINARS

Friday Morning

Kurt Busenitz – *Rural Church Multiplication: From Anomaly to Normality*

Healthy corn plants produce more corn. Healthy cattle produce more beef. Healthy churches should be a part of multiplying gospel-centered churches in spiritually-needy areas. In the spirit of Nehemiah, we will lean into pursuing healthy building blocks for effective rural church multiplication.

Brandon O'Brien – *The Small Church in the Bible*

"Bigger is better" is not in the Bible. Instead, throughout the Scriptures, God delights in doing extraordinary things through ordinary leaders and unimpressive groups. The goal of this seminar is to root our confidence in the "strategically small church" in the big story of Scripture.

David Pinckney – *Sermon/Lesson Prep When Time Is Tight*

If you struggle getting your sermon or Bible lesson done by Friday, this seminar is meant for you. The goal is to help you prepare a Jesus-exalting, biblically-accurate, relevant sermon or lesson before the end of the workweek.

Liz Pinckney – *Making and Maturing Disciples in Small Places (Women)*

During our time, we'll consider together the answer to Jesus' call to "follow me" and how we cultivate discipleship that is gospel-centered, grounded in God's word, aimed at sanctification, enjoyment in God, and teaching others to do the same.

Aaron Yoder – *Sabbath Joy*

Sabbath rest is often an unachievable wish for pastors, or simply ignored as unnecessary. We'll look at rhythms of rest and spiritual renewal found throughout Scripture, and those specifically modeled by Jesus. Then we'll seek to apply rhythms of renewal to our week, month, and year to avoid ministry burnout and restore our joy in the Lord.

Friday Afternoon

Denna Busenitz – *Snailing It! Five Encouraging Spiritual Parallels Straight to the Hearts of Ministry Wives from Isaiah 40:31 (Women)*

At first glance, snails and ministry wives don't have anything in common. But you might be surprised! We'll *snail-it* through five spiritual parallels from the nanoscopic, yet fascinating, life of a snail and the powerful truths found in Isaiah 40:31. A snail's slow pace doesn't seem fit to accomplish much, but it can finish well – and along the way, **a beautiful story is chronicled.**

Tim Howard – *Church Conflict in the Congregation: Navigating Conflict Biblically*

Conflict is inevitable in any church, but for small-town pastors it can feel especially personal. This seminar equips pastors with biblical principles and practical strategies to address disputes, restore unity, and lead faithfully. Learn how to navigate conflict with grace, strengthen relationships, and shepherd your congregation through challenges while honoring Christ.

Rex Howe – *Rekindle Loyal Love in Your Marriage*

What is the key to a lasting marriage? While there are marriages in the book of Ruth, it is not primarily about marriage. However, it is about *loyal love in relationships*. This session looks at four aspects of loyal love in Ruth that can strengthen any relationship, especially those in the covenant of marriage.

Steve Mathewson – *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Poetry*

This seminar will help small-town pastors understand how to preach the Old Testament wisdom books effectively. These books are challenging, but they teach us how to live so that life goes well (Proverbs), how to live when life gets turned upside down (Job), and how to live with the reality that life is fleeting and frustrating (Ecclesiastes).

Brandon O'Brien – *Designing a Ministry for Your Context*

Small town and country communities are unique, complex, and changing. Copy-and-paste approaches to ministry are unlikely to serve the people in our care. We need local ministries customized to local realities. The goal of this seminar is to provide tools for developing a ministry as unique as your ministry context.

Saturday Morning

Tim Howard – *Prioritizing Family Worship*

Pastors lead churches in ministry, but their first ministry must be at home. This seminar will help small church pastors develop consistent, meaningful family worship by exploring biblical foundations, overcoming time constraints, and practical ways to engage their families in prayer, Scripture, and worship, ensuring their homes reflect the faith they preach.

Rex Howe – *Measure Ministry Success with a Plan*

Ministry can be frustrating if we don't have a plan that clarifies, focuses, and aligns our decisions and activities. Nehemiah had a vision – a wall protecting Jerusalem's inhabitants. In order to realize this vision, he had a mission to get to the horizon. He had to *build*. This session will provide eight steps for strategic ministry planning and key resources to accompany the steps.

Steve Mathewson – *Strengthening Your Preaching in a Small-Town Context*

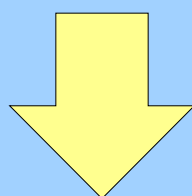
Preaching in a small-town context is challenging. You may lack adequate preparation time, the trust of long-time locals, and others with whom you can share the preaching role. This seminar will provide strategies for meeting these challenges and providing faithful expository preaching for the small-town church you serve.

David Pinckney – *Evangelism in Small Churches*

With theological certainties and personal excitement, the small church can easily see evangelism happen. This may sound too good to be true, but it's very possible. With no gimmicks or programs, a small church can see new life.

Liz Pinckney – *Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow (Women)*

Faithful endurance and stamina are two incredibly common prayer requests among those in ministry. Whether it's a season of trial or one of great joy, the source of sustaining remains the same. During our time, we'll set our gaze on the sufficiency of Christ's completed work on the cross and look forward to the future grace afforded to us in Christ's return.



SCHEDULE September 25-27

Thursday

4:00-5:15 p.m.	Check-In at Calvary Church
5:30 p.m.	Supper
6:30 p.m.	Plenary Session with Brandon O'Brien
8:00 p.m.	Fellowship time

Friday

Breakfast	At your hotel or on your own
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Seminars
9:45-10:15 a.m.	Break – Bookstore open
10:15-11:15 a.m.	Plenary Session with Steve Mathewson
11:30 a.m.	Lunch – Two Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">› Fellowship with pastors & wives› Get-to-Know RHMA
12:30 p.m.	Seminars
2:00 p.m.	Free time & Amish Country Tour
5:30 p.m.	Supper
6:30 p.m.	Plenary Session with David Pinckney

Saturday

Breakfast	At your hotel or on your own
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Seminars
9:45-10:15 a.m.	Break – Bookstore open
10:15-11:15 a.m.	Plenary Session with Adam Kipp
11:30 a.m.	Lunch & end of Conference

REGISTRATION COSTS

Pastor ONLY	\$135	Optional additional cost:
Pastor & Wife	\$180	Amish Country Tour \$15/person
Lay Leader Only	\$140	
Full-time Student	\$100	
Full-time Student & Wife	\$120	

› After September 11, ADD \$20/person

› Registration costs are non-refundable after September 11

ACTIVITIES

In addition to seminars, the following is an option for Friday afternoon (as well as on-your-own activities).

AMISH COUNTRY TOUR

Join us as we travel on a tour through the beautiful Lancaster County countryside. We will stop along the way to look around and see the Plain People's way of life and listen to the step-on tour guide talk about the sites.

HOTELS

The following rates have been secured at these hotels. Mention RHMA to receive them.

Hawthorn Suites

2045 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster

Phone: (717) 290-7100

\$111.00 (+ tax) – King with Sleeper (expires Sept. 3)

La Quinta Inn & Suites

25 Eastbrook Road, Ronks

Phone: (717) 392-8100

\$149.00 (+ tax) – Two Queens (expires Aug. 24)